

EDITORIAL.

IN THE December number of the *American Naturalist* (p. 1075), occurs the following, portions of which we italicize: "The species of tree moss, *Ursea barbata*, grows to a considerable length on the south shore of Lake Superior. * * * The moss trails from the limbs *a la the parasitic Spanish moss of the South.*" This item of "scientific news" occurs in the department under that name edited by Wm. Hosea Ballou. Just why there should be such a department in addition to the others edited by specialists, and embracing almost all branches of natural history, we can not see. The editor of this department can not be a specialist, and is therefore constantly liable to bring discredit upon the *Naturalist's* good name, by the insertion of items like the above, which savors of the style of the daily newspaper. Had this note come under the eyes of the editor of the department of botany, Dr. Bessey, it would of course have appeared in a correct form. We respectfully suggest to the editors of the *Naturalist* that they have the department of "scientific news" edited by the various specialists on their staff, and not left to the tender mercies of any special news gatherer.

IT MAY not be too late, at least for its own sake, for the GAZETTE to express its opinion on the "Hatch bill," which is pending before Congress. The bill provides for the establishment of agricultural experiment stations in connection with the agricultural colleges established under the act of 1862 in the various states and territories, or hereafter established under that act. The trustees of these colleges have entire charge of such stations, and are required to appoint a director and necessary assistants:

"It shall be the object and duty of said experiment stations to conduct original researches or verify experiments on the physiology of plants and animals, the diseases to which they are severally subject, with the remedies for the same; the chemical composition of useful plants at their different stages of growth; the comparative advantages of rotative cropping as pursued under a varying series of crops; the capacity of new plants or trees for acclimation within the isothermal limits represented by the climate of the several stations and their vicinity; the analysis of soils and water; the chemical composition of manures, natural or artificial, with experiments designed to test their comparative effects on crops of different kinds; the adaptation and value of grasses and forage plants; the composition and digestibility of the different kinds of food for domestic animals; the scientific and economic questions involved in the production of butter and cheese; and such other researches or experiments bearing directly on the agricultural industry of the United States as may in each case be deemed advisable, having due regard to the varying conditions and needs of the respective states and territories."

In order to secure uniformity of methods and results these stations are to receive advice and assistance from the Commissioner of Agriculture (though not under his control in any way), and are to report their work annually, in addition to issuing quarterly bulletins of progress. For carrying out the provisions of this act, \$15,000 annually is appropriated to each station.

No more useful legislation has ever been proposed in the United States, and the benefits accruing to the agricultural industry and botanical science, from the establishment of such stations, would be incalculable. The provision for original research and the prompt publication of results is a most commendable feature, and the bill is worthy of the heartiest support. Immense pressure has been brought to bear upon Congress, and the friends of the bill confidently expect its passage. In this hope the GAZETTE earnestly joins.

NOTES AND NEWS.

DR. GOEBEL, of Rostock, will succeed the late Dr. Wigand at Marburg.

DR. S. A. T. TUELBERG, a Scandinavian botanist, died December 15, 34 years of age.

MR. A. H. CURTISS is editor of the *Florida Farmer and Fruit Grower*, published at Jacksonville, Fla.

RUDOLF VON UECHTRITZ, chiefly known for his studies of the Silesian flora, died November 21 last, at 48 years of age.

DR. A. F. W. SCHIMPER, formerly connected with the Johns Hopkins University, has just returned to Bonn from a journey in Brazil.

MR. WILLIAM FAWCETT, of the Botanical Department, British Museum, has been appointed Director of the Jamaica Botanical Gardens.

DON FRANCISCO LOSCOS Y BERNAL, a Spanish botanist who did much to make known the flora of his region, died November, 1886, at the age of 63.

A STUDY of the microbe of rabbit septicæmia by Dr. T. Smith has been distributed by the author from the *Journal of Comparative Medicine and Surgery*.

THE ENUMERATION of North American Hypocreaceæ by Ellis and Everhart comes to a close in the January *Journal of Mycology* with the 161st number.

MR. J. H. HART, superintendent of the Government Cinchona plantation (Jamaica), has been appointed superintendent of the Trinidad Botanic Garden.

DR. TSCHIRCH recommends the addition of lead or barium compounds to the alcohol used in preserving plants as an efficient method of retaining the original colors.

FATHER SCORTECHINI, a well known Indian botanist, recently died at Calcutta. His death was induced by severe work in the botanical exploration of Perak.

DURING the last ten years between 1100 and 1200 new plants from Madagascar have been described in the *Journal of the Linnean Society* and *Journal of Botany*. Twenty nine of these are new genera.

THE EDITORS of *Notarisia* desire to compile a directory of all writers and investigators who give attention to algæ. Such will please send their addresses to Messrs. De Toni and Levi, 3422 S. Samuele, Venice, Italy.